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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/647,062	08/22/2003	Hongsheng Zhong	018360-254508	9710
826	7590	12/15/2005	EXAMINER	
ALSTON & BIRD LLP BANK OF AMERICA PLAZA 101 SOUTH TRYON STREET, SUITE 4000 CHARLOTTE, NC 28280-4000			LUU, MATTHEW	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3663	

DATE MAILED: 12/15/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/647,062

Applicant(s)

ZHONG ET AL.

Examiner

LUU MATTHEW

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 July 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-32 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-32 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-8 and 31-32, drawn to a method (dividing service territory into unassigned cells), classified in class 701, subclass 202.
 - II. Claims 9-10, drawn to a method (selecting a new route), classified in class 701, subclass 210.
 - III. Claims 11-16, drawn to a method (selecting a new driver), classified in class 705, subclass 9.
 - IV. Claims 17-18, drawn to a method (approximating the workload within a cell), classified in class 705, subclass 1.
 - V. Claims 19-22, drawn to a method (adapting a classical vehicle routing problem), classified in 705, subclass 4.
 - VI. Claims 23-26, drawn to a system (optimizing a route plan with a display), classified in class 340, subclass 995.19.
 - VII. Claims 27-29, drawn to a system (maximizing driver visit frequency), classified in class 705, subclass 7.

VIII. Claim 30, drawn to a system (optimizing unassigned routes), classified in class 701, subclass 209.

2. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions I/ II/ III/ IV/ V and VI/ VII/ VIII are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. See (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the process as claimed can be practiced by entering data on a recording spreadsheet by hand. In addition, the apparatus as claimed can be used for writing insurance policy or claims.

3. Inventions I, II, III, IV and V are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention I has separate utility such as a method for dividing service territory into unassigned cells without selecting a new route, selecting a new driver, approximating the workload within a cell, or adapting a classical vehicle routing problem. In other words, each one of the inventions recited in groups I, II, III, IV and V is separately usable in a system not having the other. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

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4. Inventions VI, VII and VIII are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention VI has separate utility such as a system optimizing a route plan with a display without maximizing driver visit frequency, or optimizing unassigned routes. In other words, each one of the inventions recited in groups VI, VII and VIII is separately usable in a system not having the other. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

5. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification and their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

6. Applicant is advised that the response to this requirement to be completed must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement is traversed (37 DFR 1.143).

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to LUU MATTHEW whose telephone number is (571) 272-7663. The examiner can normally be reached on Flexible Schedule.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, JACK KEITH can be reached on (571) 272-7663. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

M. Luu

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Luu', with a large, stylized initial 'M'.

MATTHEW LUU
PRIMARY EXAMINER